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BOOK REVIEWS.

LE MORALISME DE KANT ET L'AMORALISME CONTEMPORAIN, par Alfred Fouillée. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1905.

This is a difficult book to review. It presupposes a whole system of thought, already expounded in the previous works of a veteran philosopher, works to which he is constantly referring the reader, and it points forward to ideas hereafter to be developed in a constructive work on ethics which will complete the Philosophy of the "Idées-forces." M. Fouillée is one of the most voluminous philosophers of our day, one of the few who may be said to have adequately and completely expressed themselves. At least that will be his position when he has completed the promised work on Ethics, to which, I for one, after the perusal of the present work, shall eagerly look forward. It would obviously be out of place to attempt here an appreciation of M. Fouillée's Philosophy in general: while even his ethical position is but slightly developed in the pages before us. The present work is purely critical. It consists of a dissection of the ethical system of Kant, and on the other hand of what may be called its extreme opposite—pure Naturalism or "Amoralism" in two of its forms, the older Hedonism and the newer "Amoralism of Power" of which Nietzsche is the most famous exponent.

The chapters upon Kant are full of good criticism. It is somewhat unsympathetic criticism. Kant is a writer in whom almost every position can be understood in more than one way, in a way which makes it important, suggestive, full of meaning, capable of rational development even when no modern thinker is likely to accept it just as it stands, and a way which makes it not merely untenable, but to the last degree self-contradictory and extravagant. M. Fouillée generally prefers the latter interpretation. He does not impress one with the idea that he has ever thought himself into the position of Kant as Kant appeared to himself, and that is essential for a critic who wishes to do justice to Kant's stronger side. His weaker side has seldom been more faithfully and unsparingly exposed than by M. Fouillée. The criticism is always acute and well expressed. Much of it is not of course (as it could hardly be with so well-worn a theme) in substance very new or original, and the treatment of Nietzsche will be found perhaps by most readers the most fresh and instruc-

tive part of the book. The epigram with which the section is introduced will be read with interest by English readers :

"Selon l'épigramme d'un philosophe anglais, M. Bradley, la métaphysique consisterait à chercher de mauvaises raisons pour ce que nous croyons d'instinct. Les amoralistes, eux, cherchent de mauvaises raisons *contre* ce que nous croyons d'instinct, contre la possibilité de désintéressement et la valeur supérieure du bien moral" (p. 241).

M. Fouillée charges Nietzsche, apparently not without some justification with considerable unacknowledged obligations to his own previous writings, and traces others of that writer's paradoxes to their sources in a way which suggests how few really new thoughts are necessary to enable a brilliant stylist to dazzle a world which does not know the old ones.

In Kant and Nietzsche alike the fundamental defect discovered by M. Fouillée is a violent Dualism between Nature and Morality. Kant's Morality becomes in consequence a mass of arbitrary assumptions having no real connection with the real life of men, set over against a supposed natural man who is an equally unreal abstraction, purely selfish, absolutely limited in his thought to the world of sense, determined in every action in accordance with a mechanical law of succession quite unlike the actual mental life of a human being as revealed by a more accurate Psychology. Nietzsche, assuming the same fundamental antagonism between Morality and Nature, revolts against and dethrones one of Kant's unreal abstractions—the assumed noumenal Legislator issuing commands from the outside which have no relation to the actual conditions of human life and the actual structure of human minds, and enthrones the other moral abstraction—the purely egoistic, animal, non-social, natural man, whose worst tendencies are hypostatized into an "Über-mensch" who has as little in common with real human nature as the "noumenal self" of Kant.

The following passages will perhaps indicate M. Fouillée's general attitude :

"Nous rejetons le dualisme. Nous accordons que la nature *incomplètement* interprétée est amoral; mais, prise dans sa vraie et entière signification, que fait entrevoir l'expérience intérieure, la nature est pensée et désir de l'idéal, non pas seulement du réel; elle est conception et amour d'une réalité supérieure; elle est donc morale, ou plutôt elle se fait elle-même morale par les idées-forces qui sont en elle, qui sont en nous, qui sont nous-mêmes" (p. 329).

“Kant, encore une fois, n’a pas seulement, comme tous les vrais philosophes, cherché le monde réel au delà des *sens* externes; il l’a cherché au delà de notre *conscience* intime, dans une sphère qui demeure spéculativement indéterminée et indéterminable, la sphère des noumènes. Il a exilé la réalité vraie en dehors et au delà de toute expérience, même intérieure: il l’a conçue comme transcendante. C’est cette conclusion qui, nous l’avons fait voir, n’est ni nécessaire ni justifiable, soit au point de vue de la théorie, soit au point de vue de la pratique, où elle ne peut engendrer qu’un moralisme formaliste sans soutien dans la réalité. Aux “formes” rationnelles de Kant il faut substituer *l’expérience*, mais en poursuivant l’expérience la plus *radicale* et la plus totale, d’où finit par sortir l’universalité. A la théorie kantienne de la *conscience* de soi, que Kant représente soit comme *sens* intérieur, soit comme conscience *intellectuelle* d’une simple *forme* vide, nous opposerons, dans un autre ouvrage, la conscience comme expérience la plus profonde du *réel* (p. 333).

“La Nature des soi-disant *naturalistes* est une fausse nature dépouillée d’un de ses côtés, l’intérieur, tout comme la matière des soi-disant matérialistes est une fausse matière, dans laquelle il ne rest plus que des formes mathématiques et logiques, sans rien qui la constitue au dedans. Vouloir tirer une morale quelconque d’une telle nature ou d’une telle matière, c’est assurément vouloir tirer le plus du moins, l’être, la vie, le sentiment et la puissance d’une machine formée de rouages abstraits tournant dans le vide selon des lois abstraites. Les matérialistes sont des idéalistes sans le savoir et sans le vouloir.

Mais le sens matérialiste du mot Nature est un sens métaphysique, finalement abusif, qu’on n’a pas le droit de lui donner. La Nature peut sans doute désigner le monde matériel le mécanisme universel, dans lequel les matérialistes veulent faire rentrer les phénomènes de la vie mentale. Mais la Nature peut désigner aussi l’être universel avec ses lois fondamentales, la *Natura naturans* de Spinoza; et c’est ce dernier sens qui est seul légitime. La vraie morale des idées-forces, est alors celle qui veut que l’homme vive conformément aux lois profondes de la Nature universelle, telle que nous pouvons en avoir l’idée non seulement par les sciences objectives, mais encore et surtout par les sciences subjectives” (p. 345).

La nature, c’est le grand Tout, et la moralité, que veulent en

vain supprimer les adorateurs du plaisir ou de la puissance, est une partie du Tout, mais qui, grosse de l'avenir, vaut plus que le tout considéré tel qu'il est actuellement (p. 347).

These are excellent maxims. They suggest no doubt the spirit in which a sound Moral Philosophy should be written. Everything of course depends upon the execution: and what M. Fouillée's actual Moral Philosophy will be like the present work does not enable us to say. The author's object, he tells us, is to prepare the way for it by explaining his attitude towards the sharply opposed but equally one-sided systems which are here criticized. This object he has accomplished in a way which shows that the writer's hand has lost nothing of its acknowledged power, but his position as a thinker will depend mainly upon his more constructive works.

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THE PROPHET OF NAZARETH. By Nathaniel Schmidt, Professor of Semitic Languages and Literatures in Cornell University, Director of the American School of Archæology in Jerusalem. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1905. Pp. xii and 422. 8vo.

This book is at once a delight and a disappointment. There has long been a need for a life of Christ by a thorough Semitic scholar, of reverent and devout temper, who should in his work follow sane critical principles. The work under review is the product of a competent Semitic professor, and is written in an admirable spirit—a spirit at once appreciative and critical—but it is nevertheless a disappointing work. Broad and accurate as the scholarship is in the main, and much as one admires the mastery which it displays, of many and varied fields of learning, it nevertheless goes astray at the most crucial point, the analysis and exegesis of the Synoptic Gospels. Admirable as is the spirit displayed throughout the book, and evident as is the author's effort to throw aside all prepossessions and follow the evidence, he is notwithstanding ruled throughout by the idea that Jesus was nothing more than man, and that to suppose that he was more is to make him unworthy of the admiration of men of robust minds at the present day.